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Subject:—"The Science of Language."

The Science of Language is too extensive a subject to be satisfactorily treated in one paper, and I therefore propose upon the present occasion to confine myself to one branch only—that of the origin of language—and under this to enquire whether there are data from which we can draw any and what conclusions as to the source of languages and the manner in which they have been formed. That this is a perfectly legitimate subject of enquiry, falling within the range of scientific investigation, will, I think, at once appear from the consideration that all languages have been found to vary in ascertainable directions, and that there is a certain analogy between the modes of variation of different languages. The English of Queen Victoria differs sensibly from that of Queen Elizabeth, and yet more noticeably from that of Edward the Third. The French of Louis Napoleon differs from that of Henry the Fourth, and still more from that of Philip of Valois. The Greek of Plato differs from that of Homer. In the same manner every existing language spoken in countries which possess any literary monuments, going back only a few centuries, is found to differ from the earlier forms of the language which have been thus preserved. And it has been found by a comparison of these various changes that they have all operated in an analogous direction, so far as they affect the form of the language—in the direction, that is, of simplifying at once the pronunciation and the grammar. Letters and syllables are dropped out of words. Thus in English, levedi has become lady, timé time, Romé Rome, for originally both these words were pronounced as words of two syllables. Thus Gower has—

"So well I nought that any timé
Be lost of that thou hast do by me."

And

"To speke a goodly word unto me
For all the gold that is in Romé."

And at the same time the shades of meaning which were originally indicated by inflections of the original word, by affixes or suffixes, are either indicated by its position in the sentence or are left to be inferred by the hearer from his perception of the general meaning of the speaker, or are shown by the use of prepositions. To this process the term of phonetic decay has been given.*

Side by side with this process, however, there has gone on another, which consists either in the adoption of new words to express ideas which previously have been expressed imperfectly or not at all, or in a change in the meaning of old words. Thus, apart from the scientific words which are of almost daily coinage, in order to express new objects or new relations, the recent introduction and diffusion of the railway system in England has given rise to a great number of new terms or to new applications of old terms, some of which are gradually passing into common use. In the same way every new development of opinion or of feeling necessarily requires, in order that it may be adequately conveyed, either a new nomenclature or a change in the meaning of the old names if the old names are retained. And this change also appears to have rules to which it conforms. With regard to the coinage of new words, or their introduction from other languages to express new ideas, the reason of this is found sometimes in the picturesqueness or even the grotesqueness of the term, but more generally in the circumstance that it appropriately and completely represents some idea which could previously be expressed only imperfectly, or by a periphrasis. Thus the word "taboo," introduced by Captain Cook from the Polynesian Islands, and which may be considered as naturalized, expresses the same idea as that of the Latin "sacer," or the Hebrew word which we translate holy; but as both of these words and their derivatives had themselves, so to speak, become "tabooed"—that is, set apart from ordinary use and appropriated to a peculiar class of ideas, and had, by reason of their habitual associations, become incapable of being applied without a revulsion of feeling to common objects—some word was wanted to supplement them, and this was found in the word "taboo." But, besides this conscious addition to our vocabulary, there is a constant process of change, by which new meanings are attached to old words, or new associations are connected with them, so that if retained they convey altogether different ideas, but often are altogether dropped out of ordinary use, and thus leave a vacancy, which some other word is required to fill.

Of the former, I may take as a familiar instance the word prevent, originally used indifferently in the sense of going before either to remove obstacles, or to place them in the way. In the former sense, which still survives in the theological term, "prevenient gracie," it is used in the Book of Common Prayer and in the Articles of the Church of England; but in ordinary use, the latter sense has come to be the only one attached to it. And with regard to the latter—that is, the case in which new associations become connected with words and lead to their disuse—any one familiar with the literature of the time of Elizabeth, and, still more, with that of Chaucer, will be able to remember enough instances to render any mention on my part quite superfluous. And my object at this moment is not to exhibit in detail the manner in which languages decay and are regenerated, but simply to call attention to the fact that these two processes, whose operations we can trace in all living languages at the present moment, have been in perpetual activity since the earliest literary records which we possess.

But if all living languages have thus derived their present form from general causes, which for the most part operate without any consciousness on the part of those who speak the languages, and if the same causes have been in operation in changing the form of languages which are no longer spoken, then we have obviously an instrument of investigation which we may apply for the purpose of ascertaining what were the earliest elements of speech; and, when this is approximately decided, we shall be in a position to form some opinion as to their origin and source. It need scarcely be said, however, that these conclusions must necessarily be in some degree conjectural. Up to a certain point we can proceed with confidence, because the materials exist to which our reasonings apply, and our conclusions therefrom are capable of verification. But when we have reached the limit of our researches in this direction—when we have determined approximately at least the various roots in a language—those elementary sounds which having been at first employed in some obvious, or at any rate in some definite sense, have been applied to designate a wide range of objects more or less connected by resemblance, analogy, or contrast; and when we seek from the data thus furnished to discover the source from which these roots themselves were derived, it must be confessed that our task is one of considerable difficulty, and the results must be regarded as in no small degree uncertain. And the best proof of this is the very different conclusions at which some of the most eminent men who have investigated the subject have arrived. But in this case, as in others, the differences of opinion are becoming less strongly marked in proportion as the subject is more thoroughly investigated and as the materials for forming an opinion are accumulated and sifted. And, at any rate, the subject has been so far elucidated as to permit a person, who, like myself, is only acquainted with the results of enquiry at second hand, to form his own conclusions upon the subject without being liable to the charge of presumption.

It has been a favourite idea with some writers, and probably may be said to have been the prevailing notion half a century ago—possibly in some quarters is so still—that language in the first instance was the result of a Divine revelation, and as a corollary from this that the original language was Hebrew. I need hardly say that such an idea derives no support from the Bible. In whatever light we may regard the narrative contained in the second chapter of Genesis, the idea that the writer obviously intended to convey is that the forming and affixing names to the various animals brought before him was the work of the man. He was to see the animal, and to utter some sound presumably corresponding to the idea which it excited in his mind. But there is no hint of supernatural assistance or suggestion, or of anything beside the natural play of the human faculties translating into sound, so to speak, the impression produced by external objects upon the new organization.

Independently, however, of these considerations, there are others which would seem to show that Hebrew, and in fact every language, has been not a revelation, but a growth. These considerations are derived from the circumstance that all the words in that language which express religious or moral or abstract ideas are derived analogically from words which have reference to sensible objects, and in a great degree to words connected with the parts or processes of the human body. Thus the Hebrew word for spirit, no less than the Greek and Latin words for the same idea, is derived from the word, or rather is the word which signifies breath or wind. Elohim is derived from a root which signifies strength. "In the Hebrew anger is expressed in numerous ways, all equally picturesque, and all alike derived from physiological facts. Sometimes the metaphor is taken from the rapid and animated breathing which accompanies passion, sometimes from heat or from boiling, sometimes from the action of breaking with a crash, sometimes from shaking; discouragement and despair are expressed by an inward dissolving, by the melting of the heart; fear, by loosening of the reins; pride is painted by elevation of the head, the form erect and unbending; patience is a lengthened, impatience a shortened breathing; desire is thirst, or paleness; pardon is expressed by a number of metaphors borrowed from the ideas of covering, concealing, passing over a fault, a cloth that wipes it out. To shake the head, to look at one another, to let fall the arms, are expressions which the Hebrew prefer to express the ideas of disdain, indecision, weariness, to any psychological expressions. Other ideas, more or less abstract, have received their name by a similar process. The idea of truth is

* Note—Max Müller, "Lectures on the Science of Language."

derived from that of solidity, or stability; that of beauty, from brightness; of good, from straightness; of evil, from turning aside, from crookedness, or from an offensive smell; to make or create is originally to cut out; to think is to speak; bone signifies substance." I have quoted this from Renan's work on the Semitic languages, not for the purpose of drawing any distinction in this respect between the Hebrew and other languages, but simply for the purpose of showing that the stage of the language in which we know it, and in which these various metaphorical expressions had become the recognised and intelligible means of expressing ideas not included in their original sense, and without which it could not have conveyed the lessons which it has been the means of teaching to the world, was the result of a gradual growth and development. The language must have existed for a long time before it reached the point at which it had arrived when we first became acquainted with it. And the people among whom it originated—those who first spoke it, could have had no ideas beyond those suggested by mere sensible phenomena, which alone their language directly expressed. That is to say, the literal must, in the order both of idea and of fact, have preceded the metaphorical or figurative use of words; and the latter could only have sprung up by degrees as new ideas were acquired, for which no corresponding words existed. These ideas, as they arose, were necessarily and naturally expressed by words, which either described their outward manifestations, as "loosening of the reins" for "fear," or described something which was felt to be analogous, as "straightness" for "justice."

But this suggests a feature common to all languages, namely, that the coinage, so to speak, of absolutely new words is one of the rarest of all phenomena. I have said that the introduction of new words—new, that is, to the language into which they are introduced—is constantly in operation; but none of these words, with few and inconsiderable exceptions, are really new—new, that is, in their elements. They are either introduced from a foreign language directly, together with the object which they signify, as "potato," or they are framed to express some relation or analogy of the object, or both, as "Pomme de terre." And even in scientific nomenclature, where names are systematically invented for new objects or new combinations, these are always derived from existing words, and are framed for the most part consciously upon the same principles as those which unconsciously influence the people in their selection. What has been said of Nature in reference to another branch of science—that of natural history—may be said of languages here: that they are prodigal of variety, but niggard of innovation. All that is required is effected by some variation in the form or some modification of the sense of existing words, and rarely or never by the making, in the absolute sense, of new sounds to express the new idea. The reason of this is obvious upon a moment's reflection. The first object of language is to convey ideas, and the necessary condition of this is that it shall be understood. Now a new idea is capable of being conveyed by a metaphor without any risk of its not being understood. To say of a just person that his conduct was straight, though obviously metaphorical, would be as intelligible, even the first time it was employed, as to say now to us that it was just. When the witness who was asked what he thought of some particular act replied that he should not say that it was quite the clean potato, no one for a moment would doubt what was the meaning he intended to convey. But if an absolutely new word is invented to express some new idea, then in order to its being understood it must at the same time be defined; and though this would be possible in a scientific essay, it would be quite out of place in the ordinary intercourse of mankind. In the case of a new object, the thing itself generally supplies the definition, as in the case of the potato referred to before; but instances of that nature do not affect the general rule. It may therefore not merely be taken as an established fact that in all languages the ordinary, if not the universal, process has been to express new ideas by modifications of the forms of existing words, or by new applications of their meaning; but we can see that such a process is the only one consistent with the object of language itself, viz., that of the intercommunication of ideas.

I have already said that the Hebrew language, in employing metaphorical expressions for the purpose of representing feelings, or relations, or ideas, only follows the course which all new languages have pursued. As Carlyle says:—"All unmetaphorical language you shall in vain seek for. Is not your very attention a stretching to?" And all these metaphors are originally derived from sensible objects. Thus, I quote from Farrar's work on the origin of language—"To take the first group of English words that present themselves, what is 'imagination' or 'reflection' but the summoning up of a picture before the inward eye? What is 'comprehension' but a grasping; 'disgust' but an unpleasant taste; 'insinuation' but a getting into the bosom of anything? 'Courage' is a good heart; 'rectitude' a perpendicular position; 'austerity' is dryness; 'superciliousness' a raising of the eyebrow; 'humility' is something cognate to the ground; 'fortune' is the falling of a lot; 'virtue' is that which becomes a man; 'humanity' is the proper characteristic of our race; 'courtesy' is borrowed from palaces; 'calamity' is the hurrying of the wind among the reeds. What are 'aversion' and 'inclination' but a turning away from and a bending towards? 'Error' is a wandering out of the way; 'envy' is looking upon another with an evil eye; an 'emotion' is a movement of the soul; 'influence' recalls the ripple circling on the surface of a stream; 'heaven' is the canopy raised over our heads; 'hell' is the hollow space beneath our feet; 'religion' (according as we may prefer the derivation of Cicero, or of Lactantius, or of Augustine) is a solemn study, or a binding, or a new choice; an 'angel' is a messenger; a 'spirit' but a breath of air; and we may carry our illustration into still higher regions—those of faith and worship. 'Mystery' is derived from 'mu,' the imitation of closing the lips; 'priest' from 'presbuteros,' elder; 'sacrament' is derived from the meaning 'oath'; 'baptism' is dipping; 'propitation' is bringing near; 'wisdom' is that which we have seen."

It is not necessary to show by analogous examples from other languages that the same rule applies to them. It may, I believe, be stated as a universal proposition that every word in all known languages which is employed to describe feeling and thought, or their processes or results, is derived from some word which originally expressed merely something cognizable by the senses. I will add only one further instance to those which I have already given, and that is the word which to us represents the highest of all ideas—the word God. The origin of our English word is uncertain, no satisfactory derivative having yet been suggested. But the words which in Greek and Latin and Sanscrit express this idea—Θεος, Deus, Dyaus—are all derived from a word which signifies the sky, and that word from a root which signifies brightness; and the same is the case, among other languages, with the Chinese. In Hebrew, as I have already pointed out, the word Elohim, which in the authorized version is translated God, is derived from a root that signifies strong or powerful. And Jehovah—or as the most eminent continental scholars consider that it ought to be written and pronounced "Yahveh"—is derived from the Hebrew word "to be," and that again apparently from a onomatopœia of breathing.

If, however, this is the case, then we are enabled to draw an important general inference, viz., that in their origin all languages expressed only the impressions which objects made upon the senses, and that everything else that we now find in them is the result of a development. This does not imply any opinion that the men by whom the language was first formed were incapable of perceiving the various relations, or of experiencing the different feelings which have been since embodied in language, but only that they had not arrived at such a stage of mental analysis as enabled them to separate the feeling from its manifestation, or to conceive of the relations as existing apart from the objects related. They may have possessed capacities equal to those of any of their descendants; but even if this had been the case they must, nevertheless, have passed through the process which every human being has now to pass through, viz., that of receiving ideas from impressions, and co-ordinating these ideas according to the nature of the impressions. It, however, justifies us in saying that if they had any innate ideas that were not derived from the senses, upon which I offer no opinion, they had no faculty which enabled them to invent an articulate sound that should serve as a sign for them so that they might be communicated from one to the other. And we can further say that in the process of co-ordinating their impression and of employing appropriate sounds which might represent them to others, they had not the assistance of the accumulated experience of prior generations; but had to work out the problem for themselves without assistance. The question, then, which we have to consider is—how was this done; what were the materials at their disposal; and what was the process by which those materials were rendered available?

The first difficulty which we encounter in entering upon this enquiry is that which arises from our utter ignorance of the primitive conditions of humanity. And we not only do not know, but it is scarcely possible by any effort of imagination to realize to ourselves any probable picture of their condition. In Europe we know, from recent discoveries, that at some unknown previous epoch there existed a race who left no other memorials of their presence than a few doubtful bones and some implements chipped out of flint and possibly some beads. But whether any of their descendants have survived or whether they have been all swept away by the races who intruded upon their country from the East is utterly unknown to us. In the East, to which we at least may look as the birthplace of our ancestors, there is nothing to show us an older condition of humanity than the shepherd's tent for the pastoral tribes, and cities and commerce for the settled agricultural communities; and both of these imply a long previous existence of man. To domesticate sheep and cattle—to learn the art of weaving, in order to make garments and tents—to have established the settled relations of master and servant, or owner and slave—all of these imply many generations, in which the foundation of such a state of society could have been laid, and many, in addition, during which these various occupations and relations could have become the normal state of the community. And agriculture and commerce require for their development a period of at least equal duration. In fact, with regard to the ancestors of the present civilized races of Europe and Western Asia, the language itself, whose origin we are now seeking to determine, furnishes us with the oldest glimpses of their early condition; but these, though they antedate all authentic history, carry us back only to a point very far removed from the origin of society or of humanity. We are, therefore, after all, compelled to have recourse to our imagination, in order to form a conception of the condition of mankind at the time when they formed their language, and to suggest the manner in which this work was accomplished; admitting fully, at the same time, that after all the picture which the imagination may frame can only be regarded as an approximation to the truth—depicting the manner in which language might have been formed, but not affording any absolutely certain grounds for the conclusion that in fact it was formed in that manner.

There have been two theories which have been proposed upon the subject—the onomatopœtic and the interjectional; or, as Professor Müller calls them with more conciseness than politeness, the bow-wow theory and the pooh-pooh theory—the former assuming that language is derived from the intentional or unconscious imitation of the sounds uttered by various animals, or produced by any phenomenon, as the cracking of a branch, the crash of a falling tree, the rattle of thunder, the rustling of leaves, and other analogous instances, for the purpose of describing them to others; and the other supposing that the object would as a rule be indicated by pointing it out, and that some sound would be used for the purpose of calling attention to it. To these now may be added a third, which—remembering the joke of Goethe, that if a German professor had to describe a camel he would retire to his study and proceed to evolve the idea from the depths of his own conciousness—one might be tempted to call the "professor" theory, that is, that language is self-evolved, that it is in some mysterious and inexplicable way the product of human consciousness; so that, to parody a famous expression, the man secretes language in the same manner as the liver secretes bile. At least this is the only sense I can put upon the somewhat ambiguous language in which this third theory has been put forth. It however appears to me that all of these theories, even the last, contain something of truth, and

that they are defective only in so far as they are exclusive; and of the three processes I should conceive that the first has been the most influential. At any rate, one thing would seem to be quite certain, that in the origination of language there are only two factors—man and external nature. All language must be the result of the effort to communicate to another, some impression which the speaker has received from some object, or some purpose or feeling in his own mind. Attending in the first place to the former, it is obvious that inasmuch as the means employed to communicate the impression is sound, it is most natural, to say the least, that the quality in the object which was selected as the mark by which it was to be recognised by the hearer should be some sound which it uttered or caused, whenever that was possible. Every writer on the subject at the present day disclaims the idea that there could have been any previous convention or agreement among men to determine the sense of words. And rightly; for to agree that any particular artificial sound should represent any particular object, it would be necessary that people should have a tolerably copious language to begin with. And yet without convention no sound could at first convey the idea of any particular absent object, unless it of itself recalled or suggested the impression which that object made; and that could scarcely be done unless the sound was in some degree imitative. *A priori*, therefore, it would seem that the bow-wow theory has at any rate the merit of accounting for a very considerable portion of the phenomena. And an examination of all languages shows that in fact, even now, after so many generations of speakers, when change of country, of circumstances, of habits, and even in some degree of organization, has tended to obliterate much of the early mechanism and sound of the words of which they are composed, each one of them bears deep and unmistakable traces of the operation of this principle of the imitation of sounds. And at the same time the interjectional element—the use of those natural exclamations which come to the lips, impulsively and instinctively, in any great sudden emotion of joy, or grief, or surprise—has also had its share in supplying sounds which helped to enlarge the infant vocabulary of the race. And I must confess that when we speak of the absolute origin of the vocabulary of language—the elements out of which it was originally formed—I am unable to conceive of any other than these two—the conscious employment of sounds which imitated or suggested natural sounds or objects, and the impulsive ejaculations which the momentary feelings of the individual might prompt, and which being the same for all would be universally understood. And when these are aided by mimetic gestures or actions, as is even now common with all uncivilized tribes, I think we might even see in these three elements means of intercommunication adequate to the few wants and simple relations of primeval humanity.

It is not perhaps easy to form an adequate conception of the extent to which these two vocal elements may be traced without the help of examples, and instead of attempting to choose those for myself, I have preferred to avail myself of the labours of others, and I therefore again quote from Mr. Farrar, who has, in the work to which I have already referred, systematized and abridged the works of other writers, to whose works I have no means of access:—

"As instances of the words which have arisen from the interjectional elements—*i.e.*, from the sounds whereby we express natural emotions—we may mention the large group of words that sprang from the root ach! ah! oh! as utterances of pain, as ἄχος, ἀγέω, *achen*, *ache*; or from the sounds of groaning, as vœ, wehe, woe, wail; or from an expression of disgust, as putere (Fr., *puer*), foul, fulsome; or from smacking the lips with pleasure, as γλύκυς, dulcis, geschmack, &c. This latter class is very widely extended, even in the Semitic languages. From the expression of disgust and fear we get awe, ugly, ἀγάομαι, ἀγασσομαι, and their cognates; from shuddering, the roots φρίσσω, bristle, hérisser, &c.; from the first sounds of infancy we get babe, bambino, babble, and many more; from the sounds of anger, huff and others; lastly, from prut, a sound of arrogance, we get the words proud, pride; as in German trotzig, haughty, from trotz, an interjection of defiance and contempt. The other class of onomatopœias is far more extensive, and embraces the widest possible range of inanimate sounds. They may be ranged under the following heads; and although the examples are all taken from the English language, they might be paralleled in almost any other:—1. Animal sounds, as quack, cackle, roar, neigh, whinny, bellow, mew, purr, cluck, caw, chatter, bark, yelp, &c. 2. Inarticulate human sounds, as laugh, cough, sob, sigh, moan, shriek, yawn, whoop, weep, &c. 3. Collision of hard bodies, represented by p, t, g, as clap, rap, tap, flap, slap, rat-tat, &c. 4. Collision of softer bodies, represented by b, d, g, as dab, dub, bob, thud, dub-a-dub, &c. 5. Motion through the air, &c., as whirr, burr, sough, &c. 6. Resonance, represented by m, n, &c., as clang, knell, ring, twang, clang, din, &c. 7. Motion of liquids, &c., represented by sibilants, as clash, splash, plash, dash, smash, &c. These are but specimens of the wide extent of these words in a language by no means the most remarkable for its adoption of onomatopœia. There are even broad general laws by which the various degrees of intensity in sound are expressed by the modification of vowels. Thus, high notes are represented by i, low broad sounds by a, and the change of a or o to i has the effect of diminution, as we see by comparing the words clap, clip, clank, clink, pock, peck, cat, kitten, foal, filly, tramp, trip, nob, nipple, &c. Another way of diminuting intensity is to soften a final letter, as in tug, tow, drag, draw, swagger, sway, stagger, stay, &c. Reduplication of syllables is a mode of expressing continuance, as in murmur, &c., and the effect is also produced by the addition of e and l, as in grab, grapple, wrest, wrestle, crack, crackle, dab, dabble, &c."

And it must be remembered that classes of words whose origin is thus indicated are necessarily but a portion of those which have similarly originated. They are only such as still bear the impress of the mint in which they were originally stamped after unknown ages of use. But there must be many others which have lost all traces of their first form, and many others whose legend, so to speak, we are unable to decipher because we do not understand the language in which it was written; or in other words, we cannot realize to our imaginations the feelings and impressions which prompted their original employment. For in this work of forming a language man was not a mere passive instrument returning one uniform response to the sights and sounds by which he was surrounded. The effect of these would be modified by the character of the race and the individual. The same object appears under very different aspects to men of different organization—to the man and to the woman, to the adult and to the child. The impression produced by an animal would not be the same to the bold man who pursues, and the timid man who flies. And besides this there are differences in sensibility to external objects. It is not merely in ages of refinement that to one man the primrose suggests thoughts of returning spring, and becomes an emblem of hope and promise; while to another—

"A primrose on a river's brim
A yellow primrose is to him,
And it is nothing more."

But in all ages there have been some to whom every common object is full of suggestions, and these men would necessarily have the greatest influence in forming and enlarging the language. But then—of the almost innumerable aspects under which natural objects might present themselves to the fancy, according to the changeful mood of the observer, or the infinitely varying circumstances under which they might be perceived—who could hope that he should be able now to seize that one which was predominant at the moment, and which determined the sound by which such objects should for the future be designated. Of the 500 synonyms that are said to exist in Arabic for a lion, how are we to determine the one that represents the first vocables by which the idea of its anticipated presence was made known, or to explain the particular impression which these vocables were intended to represent? It is no subject of surprise, consequently, that in all languages there should exist many roots, original so far as we can determine, but for which we are unable to account upon either the imitative or the interjectional theory. But I think that this need not in any degree lessen our confidence in the conclusion that all the first representative sounds which formed the elements of language were derived from one or another of these sources.

It is obvious, however, that we have here only the elements of language—sounds adapted to communicate the existence of sensible objects, and, to a certain limited extent, of feelings; and to this extent there seems strong reason to believe some animals have language; at least they have the means of communication to this extent. A bee or an ant that finds a plate of sugar speedily makes its companions acquainted with the discovery; and the same is the case with dogs. Animals, too, have a great variety of sounds, which indicate pain, or pleasure, or alarm. The accounts given of monkeys proceeding on a plundering expedition appear to indicate almost an artificial code of signals, or at any rate signals by means of sounds, which to our organs are arbitrary, though they may have a natural significance to theirs. But this is not what we mean by language. And the question, therefore, is how a language could have been developed from these original sounds. And here comes in the third element—the human faculty. Starting necessarily from the same point as the animal—that is, from the sights and sounds of external nature—from impressions received through the senses, these impressions are in the case of man differently modified by his bodily organization and by his mental faculties. The action, so to speak, in the two cases is identical, or nearly so; but the reaction is different, partly no doubt because the impression received is to some extent modified by the difference between the organs of sense in animals and men, but principally because man possesses powers and faculties which, if not absolutely distinct in kind, are at any rate incomparably superior in degree to those possessed by animals. So far as we can judge, man alone possesses the power of indicating by language alone, the relations of time and place and person and number—to take these as among the simplest and most elementary of all ideas, and certainly to man alone belong the ideas of worship, reverence, trust, duty, authority, obedience, virtue, guide, shame. Not but that in some of these respects there is a vague sentiment in some animals answering to the feelings which these words represent, but that the feeling is always concrete, connected with a particular individual or act from which it is never dissociated, so that it never becomes an idea. And though there are some races of men who have no words corresponding to many of these ideas, yet there are none who have not some one or other of them, and none among whom some individuals may not be found capable of understanding most or all. And hence it is that though all languages bear unmistakable traces of having originated from the interaction of external objects and the human intellect, yet none of them have remained in their original condition. All, by various processes, analogous under many aspects, but differing as to their form and results in the different families of languages, have arrived at a condition in which they are able to represent by appropriate words such subjects and relations as the speaker, the person to whom he is speaking, and the person of whom he is speaking; the place where the speaker is, that which is near to that place, and that which is not near; the number, whether one or more than one; the relations of the family, father, mother, husband, wife, son, daughter; classes of objects, earth, water, tree, stone, bow, spear, dog, &c.; motion, going and coming, going forth and returning; feelings of joy, sorrow, pain, anger, &c. This is not intended as an exhaustive catalogue, but merely as an illustration of the various subjects which even the simplest known language is able to express; and it indicates two attributes of the human mind in its earliest stages by means of which imitative sounds are developed into a language—First, that intuitive or instinctive faculty of classification by virtue of which every word employed to designate an object becomes almost necessarily a representative of the class to which that object belongs; and, second, that perception of relations by virtue of which an idea suggests its opposite or its complement, as here, there; now, then; whole, part; good, bad; light, darkness; parent, child; me, not me, &c. Add to this the power of perceiving analogies between objects and ideas, between bodily sensations and mental emotions, and of expressing the one by means of signs originally appropriated to the other, and vocal organs capable of giving almost infinite modifications to a few simple sounds, and you have at once, as it seems to me, the origin of language, and the means by which it has been developed until it becomes an instrument of such compass, power, refinement, and utility as that English language which we employ.

Andrews, Thomas, & Fisher, Printers, Grenfell Street, Adelaide.

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